



HORSE SPORT

IRELAND

Athlete Nomination Policy for the Paris Paralympic Games 2024 Discipline of Para-Dressage

Introduction

This Policy sets out the Horse Sport Ireland process for selecting athletes and horses to:

- a) be considered eligible for nomination for selection;
 - b) be nominated for selection and;
 - c) be selected to the Irish team ("Irish Team") for Para-Dressage at the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris.
- To be considered eligible for nomination for selection, athletes have to be internationally classified with a 'Confirmed' sport class status or a 'Review' sport class status with a review date after 31 December 2024.
 - In addition to the criteria for eligibility for nomination for selection, there are minimum eligibility requirements (MER) which the athlete and horse, as a combination, need to meet in order to be considered for nomination by the Paris Para-Dressage Nominations Committee ("the Nominations Committee").
 - The Para-Dressage High Performance Director (the "PDHPD") together with the members of the Nomination Committee are the technical experts who nominate an athlete/horse combination for selection.
 - The following individuals will comprise of the Paris Para-Dressage Nominations Committee:
 - Debora Pijpers - Para-Dressage High Performance Director
 - Dermot Cannon – List 1 judge Dressage
 - Dara Kearney - Chairperson of the Nomination Committee and HSI Para Dressage High Performance Chairperson
 - Gerald Bloomer – Independent Member and Observer
 - The actual selection of any athlete/horse combination will be made by the Paralympics Ireland ("PI").

Nomination for Selection

- a) Nominations for selection for the Irish Para-Dressage Team or individual allocations will be made to Paralympics Ireland on the 29th of July 2024.
- b) Paralympics Ireland is the body which has the power to select an athlete for the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris, France.
- c) PI agrees to notify Horse Sport Ireland of its selection or its refusal to select any nominated athlete as soon as reasonably practicable after PI receives the nominations.

Section 1 – Key Timelines

The Horse Sport Ireland Paralympic nomination process timelines are as follows:

1.1

- **4 March 2024:** FEI notifies the NPCs in writing about the number of allocated qualification slots.
- **18 March 2024:** NPCs confirm in writing the use of allocated qualification slots.
- **3 May 2024:** Deadline for Paris 2024 Organising Committee to receive accreditation application forms submitted by NPCs (“Accreditation Long List”) for Paris Paralympic Games.
- **19 June 2024:** End of the period for athlete/horse combinations to attain a minimum eligibility score.
- **9 July 2024:** The Nominations Committee nominates the Athlete/Horse Combinations and P Alternate Athlete/Horse Combinations (Reserves) in order of preference that will be recommended to the Paralympics Ireland to represent Ireland at the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris subject to Section 5.
- The PDHPD on behalf of the Nominations Committee will contact athletes in an online call. Thereafter a formal email notification will issue. Selection of nominees will be published on the HSI website on this date.
- **29 July 2024:** The NGB CEO formally nominates athletes to PI, via a PI Nomination List, within two days of the expiry of the NGB Appeal period. Paralympics Ireland will confirm receipt of the nomination of Athlete/Horse Combinations as submitted. Thereafter, Paralympics Ireland will either issue Team Ireland Agreements for execution or indicate its refusal to select nominated athlete/horse combinations.
- **5 August 2024:** Deadline for Paris 2024 Organising Committee to receive sport entry forms submitted by NPCs.
- **27 August 2024:** Arrival of athletes and PDHPD at the Paralympic Village.
- **28 August 2024:** Arrival of horses in Jardy, France.
- **30 August 2024:** Arrival of horses at the competition venue in Versailles, France.
- **2 September 2024:** First horse inspection for Para-Dressage.

Section 2 - Eligibility for Nomination

Athletes and horses to be considered to represent Ireland at the 2024 Paralympic Games must comply with the following:

- 2.1 Citizenship: the athlete has to hold a valid Irish Passport with an expiry date at least 6 months after the end of the Games i.e., on or after 10 March 2025.
- 2.2 From and including the year in which they reach their 14th birthday, athletes are eligible to take part in the Para Equestrian Dressage Competitions.
- 2.3 To be eligible for participation at the 2024 Paralympic Games all athletes and horses, in accordance with the [FEI Regulations for Equestrian Events at the Paralympic Games](#) must earn a FEI Certificate of Capability by having achieved at least one (1) sixty-four (64) percent score at a FEI Para Equestrian 3* or above event in an Individual or Team competition between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2022 or by having achieved at least one (1) sixty-four (64) percent score at a FEI Para Equestrian 3* or above event in a Grand Prix Test A or Grand Prix Test B from 1 January 2023 to 19 June 2024. The rules and a list of qualifying events can be found on the FEI website [HERE](#).
- 2.4 For Para Equestrian Dressage, Horses must be born on or before 31 December 2018 (6 years of age - the age being counted from 1st January of the year of birth)

- 2.5 The athlete and horse must be registered with the FEI at the time of application, selection, and until the conclusion of the Paralympic Games.
- 2.6 The rider of a Horse belonging to a partnership, company or a syndicate of owners must inform HSI by 12 June 2024 of the name of one owner. In this way, HSI can inform the FEI by the date of the OCOG/IPC Nominated Entries for NPCs: 19 June 2024 of the name of one owner to ensure that it is entered in the Paralympic Accreditation System.

Section 3 - Responsibilities

- 3.1 It is each athlete's responsibility to be fully cognisant of the current FEI Rules for Para-Dressage and the FEI Clean Sport policy.
- 3.2 Athletes must strictly abide by the following:
 - a) FEI General Regulations, Sport Rules and the FEI Regulations for Equestrian Events Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.
 - b) FEI Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the Horse.
 - c) FEI Equine Anti-Doping Rules and Equine Controlled Medication Rules and the Human Anti-Doping Rules as set out by the FEI and Sport Ireland.
 - d) Horse Sport Ireland General Rules.
 - e) The Horse Sport Ireland Athlete Code of Conduct.
 - f) Prompt communications with the Para-Dressage High Performance Director, Team Veterinarian, Horse Sport Ireland in relation to the HSI High Performance Programme and Paralympics Ireland/IOC Paralympic in relation to Advance Data Capture requirements and Official PG Transporter in respect of Equine transport logistics.
 - g) Athletes must show a commitment to personal fitness and professional behaviour.
 - h) All Athletes selected will be required to wear the official Team Ireland kit while participating at the 2024 Paralympic Games.
 - i) Athlete must be prompt in their communications with Paralympics Ireland in respect of submitting details for purposes of Advanced Data Capture to ensure appropriate accreditation.
 - j) Athletes must be medically fit to complete all obligations. All injuries or medical conditions that may affect performance must be reported to the Para-Dressage High Performance Director as soon as the athlete is, or should reasonably be aware of, such injury or medical condition.
 - k) If necessary, Athletes must also have a current up to date Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) approved by the FEI.

Section 4 – Veterinary

- 4.1 Horse Sport Ireland can request that an athlete's horse be presented for inspection by the Team Veterinarian at any time, either during the season before nomination or after nomination and selection by the Paralympics Ireland. Athletes must comply with this request. Athletes must keep the Team Veterinarian fully briefed on any health or soundness issues the horse may have both historically and throughout the season. Athletes must notify the Para-Dressage High Performance Director of any change in their horse's health status or of any veterinary issues when they first become apparent.
- 4.2 Horse Sport Ireland can send the Team Veterinarian and/or an appointed Veterinarian to take a blood and/or urine sample from a horse at any time, for the purposes of testing for prohibited substances, and/or as part of an assessment of the horse's well-being.
- 4.3 Athletes (at their own expense) shall make available, upon the request of the Team Veterinarian, the veterinary records of horses being considered for nomination. In addition,

- athletes, (at their own expense), shall be responsible for supplying any follow-up diagnostic information requested by the Team Veterinarian for horses being considered for nomination.
- 4.4 Each athlete will be required to keep a logbook for their horses in which they must record all products and treatments used on or given to their horse from 22nd July 2024 until the completion of the 2024 Paralympic Games. The Team Veterinarian must be provided at regular intervals post nomination. The Logbook must be submitted with a signed declaration.
- 4.5 Athletes should note that horses nominated for the Paralympic Games will be subjected to FEI Pre-Arrival Testing (PAT). The PAT service will be available from 20th June 2024 for full screening. The Para-Dressage High Performance Director reserves the right to select horses for PAT. The Team Veterinarian can submit samples that will be tested for substances listed on the FEI Equine Prohibited Substances List. Samples are to be sent to the FEI Central Laboratory, LGC in Newmarket or LCH Paris or any of the designate FEI laboratories. The results will be disclosed to the Para-Dressage High Performance Director & Team Veterinarian.

Section 5 - Specific Nomination Criteria

Core Objective:

This nomination policy combines both competition and general criteria for the Nominations Committee to select the IRL Para-Dressage combinations to compete at the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris. The Nominations Committee primary objective is to nominate the appropriate combinations to give Ireland the best chance of a **Top 10 team finish** and **at least one top five finish individually** at the 2024 Paralympic Games. Based on results, three team members will be selected and one combination will be selected that represents Ireland individually.

- 5.1 In assessing the performances of Combinations, the PDHPD together with the members of the Nominations Committee will consider the following competitions & general measures:

(A) Competition Measures

- i. The following events are deemed identified key events for the purposes of selection for the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris. All combinations eligible for selection will be expected to compete at least two CPEDI3*'s, of which at least one has to be ridden in Europe:
 - Addington 11-14 March 2024
 - Waregem 19-21 April 2024
 - Fontainebleau 23-28 April 2024
 - Mannheim 1-7 May 2024
 - Hickstead 6-9 May 2024
 - Wellington 4-9 June 2024
 - Hagen 6-9 June 2024
 - Kronenberg 13-16 June 2024
 - Hartpury 30th June – 7th of July 2024
- ii. To assess the performances of Combinations, the Nominations Committee will look at all the results obtained at the events mentioned above. The Committee will consider the results with emphasis on the Grand Prix A and Grand Prix B tests followed by consideration of the results in the Freestyle.
- iii. Across the identified key events, the Committee will look for consistency of scores over 68%. Combinations should note that the Committee reserves the right to consider scores below 68%

should same be merited, particularly where combinations are promising combinations for the future.

- iv. Each Athlete is required to fill out a Performance Outcome Profile (POP) for each horse at two key events at CPEDI3* level.
- v. Athletes will have to complete their POPs prior to each key event wherein they will set a scoring range for their Grand Prix A test, Grand Prix B test and Freestyle. Athletes are required to submit their POPs to the Performance Director by the day before the vet check of the event takes place.
- vi. Athletes are required to submit their finalised POPs to the Performance Director the day after the event takes place.

Thereafter, the Nomination Committee will consider:

- vii. The trend in average Grand Prix A and Grand Prix B scores in 2023 and 2024. Scores in 2024 will be given greater weight than scores obtained in 2023.
- viii. The overall quality of the start list (determined by FEI rankings of the other athletes and their current form), the star level of the panels of judges and the star level of the shows.
- ix. The experience of the athlete and horse as a combination and their ability to cope with the pressures and challenges of the Paralympic Games.
- x. Exceptional ability of a Combination (and the potential to achieve an exceptional high placing or podium finish) may be a consideration and may, in the Nominations Committee sole discretion, place a Combination with less experience or consistency ahead of another Combination.
- xi. The degree of commitment to the HSI Para Dressage High Performance Programme.

An athlete may request special consideration for competing at less than two CPEDI3*s by submitting a written request prior to the start of the identified key event to the PDHPD, who will seek advice from the Para Dressage Nominations Committee, and approve or disapprove the request based on these factors:

1. The athlete/horse combinations scores and consistency of scores at CPEDI3*'s since the 1st of January 2023;
2. Previous international experience of the athlete and/or horse;
3. The circumstances, facts, and in the case of illness or injury to a horse or athlete, documentation by the Team Veterinarian and / or physician(s) approved by HSI;
4. Unforeseen circumstances which create a logistical emergency; and/or
5. Cancellation of Event(s).

If the PDHPD approves the above exception for the athlete to whom the exception was granted, one may also require an additional home visit or a live online session to monitor ongoing "state of preparedness." If a home visit or live online session is requested, the athlete must comply with the request.

(B) General Considerations

- i. The soundness of the horse to meet the challenges of competing and travelling to the 2024 Paralympic Games will be a significant factor in any nomination decision. Athletes must keep the Team Veterinarian fully briefed on any health or soundness issues the horse may have both historically and throughout the season.
- ii. The ability of the horse to travel to Paris uneventfully.
- iii. Athletes are required to disclose any illness or injury (however minor) to the PDHPD and Team Veterinarian. Where it becomes apparent that a nominated horse is unsound or unfit to travel or that there was a non-disclosure relating to soundness, the Nomination Committee and PI

reserves the right to remove that combination from nomination and selection with immediate effect.

- iv. The health and fitness of the athlete to meet the challenges of competing and travelling to the 2024 Paralympic Games will be a factor in any nomination decision.

Further consideration will be given to the following general measures:

- a. The suitability of the Combination with regard to the likely characteristics of the arenas in Paris, France and for the unexpected conditions of the Paris Paralympic Games (taking into account the objective of selection);
- b. the ability of the Athlete and his/her support personnel to operate and perform in a Paralympic environment which is highly regulated and pressurised;
- c. the ability of the Athlete and/or support team to contribute towards an effective team and winning orientated environment;
- d. the overall composition of the Combinations that have been selected, where applicable;
- e. consistency of performance and the likelihood of a suitable performance to contribute towards a top 10 outcome as a team or a top 5 outcome individually.

Section 6 – Force Majeure

- 6.1 In considering the performances of athletes at events or other attendances in line with this policy, the Nominations Committee may, at their discretion, give weight to extenuating circumstances.
- 6.2 For the purposes of section 6.1 above, extenuating circumstances means an inability to compete, or perform or contribute at an optimum level. This may arise from:
 - i. Injury or illness;
 - ii. Bereavement or personal misfortune, and/or;
 - iii. Any other factors reasonably considered by the Nominations Committee to constitute extenuating circumstances;
- 6.3 Athletes unable to compete at events or training must advise the Para-Dressage High Performance Director by email of this fact and the reasons thereof as soon as practicable after the extenuating circumstances arise.

Section 7 - Removal of Athletes and/or Horses

Subsequent to Nomination by the Nominations Committee

- 7.1 An athlete and horse as a combination, or separately, may be removed from nomination to Paralympics Ireland by the Nominations Committee for any of the following reasons:
 - a) Violation or alleged violation of the Sport Ireland and FEI (Human) Anti-Doping protocol, policies and procedure.
 - b) Violation or alleged violation of FEI Equine Anti-Doping Rules.
 - c) An adverse analytical finding following on from testing pursuant to Sport Ireland, FEI Clean Sport protocol, (Human & Equine), Horse Sport Ireland National Equine Anti-Doping Programme policies and procedures.
 - d) Violation or alleged violation of the FEI Sport Rules and Regulations and HSI General Rules.
 - e) Violation or alleged of the HSI Code of Conduct.
 - f) Any action which could damage the reputation of the Sport or the Country.
 - g) Nominated horse produces an adverse analytical finding following on from an assessment and/or Pre- Arrival Testing.

- h) The Team Veterinarian determines the nominated horse unsound, unfit, unwell to travel and compete at the Summer Paralympic Games.
- i) Where an athlete falls ill or sustains an injury subsequent to nomination by the Nominations Committee and is certified by the HSI Medical Officer or his/her designate as unfit to be nominated to PI for selection.

Subsequent to Paralympics Ireland Selection

- 7.2 An athlete and horse as a combination, or separately, may be removed from selection by the Nominations Committee and the Paralympics Ireland for any of the following reasons:
- a) Violation or alleged violation of the Sport Ireland and FEI (Human) Anti-Doping protocol, policies and procedure.
 - b) Violation or alleged violation of FEI Equine Anti-Doping Rules.
 - c) An adverse analytical finding following on from testing pursuant to Sport Ireland, FEI Clean Sport protocol, (Human & Equine), Horse Sport Ireland National Equine Anti-Doping Programme policies and procedures.
 - d) Violation or alleged violation of the FEI Sport Rules and Regulations and HSI General Rules.
 - e) Violation or alleged of the HSI Code of Conduct.
 - f) Any action which could damage the reputation of the Sport or the Country.
 - g) The selected horse produces an adverse analytical finding following on from an assessment and/or Pre- Arrival Testing.
 - h) The HSI Team Veterinarian determines the PI selected horse unsound, unfit, unwell to travel and compete at the Summer Paralympic Games.
 - i) Where an athlete falls ill or sustains an injury subsequent to selection by the Paralympics Ireland, such athlete will be subject to the “Fitness to Compete Assessment” undertaken by the PI. The decision of the Paralympics Ireland is final.

Section 8 - Reserves (P Athletes)

- 8.1 In the event an Athlete with a nominated or selected Horse is removed due to the reasons outlined in Section 7 above, the Nominations Committee in conjunction with Paralympics Ireland reserves the right to retain the nominated/selected athlete but substitute the horse with another horse campaigned by the athlete, provided same is included on the nominated entries list for the Paralympic Games.
- 8.2 In the event an Athlete and Horse as a combination, or separately, is removed due to reasons outlined in Section 7 above, and the Nominations Committee does not wish to utilise section 8.1 above or 8.1 is not applicable, the Nominations Committee reserves the right to nominate any other Athlete/Horse Combinations listed on the long list (nominated entries). For the avoidance of doubt, the P Athlete/Horse (Alternate) does not automatically move up to a Team place subsequent to nomination or selection unless expressly decided upon by the Nominations Committee.

Section 9 - Disclaimers

- 9.1 These procedures are based on FEI General Regulations, FEI Regulations for Equestrian Events at the Paralympic Games, applicable FEI Sport Rules and the 2024 Paralympics Agreement for Selection of the Athletes for the Sport – Equestrian, as presently known and understood. The selection criteria are based on the latest information available to HSI. However, the nominations procedure may not have accounted for every possible contingency.

- 9.2 As such, this nomination policy can be amended at any time by Horse Sport Ireland. Horse Sport Ireland reserves the right to amend or change the Policy where necessary at any time in order to fulfil the objective of the Policy. In the event that Horse Sport Ireland is of the opinion that such an amendment is necessary as a result of any change in any of the above stated rules, regulations and agreements, to give effect to the policy following discovery of a drafting error or oversight or for any other reason determined to be in the best interests of Horse Sport Ireland, Horse Sport Ireland shall not be responsible or liable in any way to anyone as a result of any such amendment.

Section 10 - Appeals

The following appeals procedure applies in respect of any appeal made by an athlete or owner where:

- (i) The Athlete or their horse have not been nominated to the FEI Nominated Entries list (19th June 2024) by the respective High-Performance Director.
- (ii) The Athlete or their horse have not been nominated for selection to the Irish team ("Irish Team") for Para-Dressage by the respective High-Performance Director.
- (iii) The Athlete or their horse have been designated the P athlete (the alternate), for the Para-Dressage Team.
- (iv) The Athlete or their horse has been removed from nomination subsequent to being nominated but before selection by PI.
- (v) The Athlete or their horse have not been accepted by the PI and not deemed a Selected Combination.

NGB Nomination Appeal - Limitation of Appeal

Any appeal is limited to grounds of:

- (a) bias, and/or
- (b) failure to adhere to the relevant Nomination Policy document

NGB Nomination Appeal - Notice of Appeal

1. The Appeal must be delivered by midnight on the day after the nominations have been announced. Selection of nominees by the Nominations Committee will be published on the HSI website, if relating to nomination.
2. If the appeal relates to removal from nomination, all applicable timeframes may be truncated, and the athlete will be informed of such timeframes when they are informed such removal.
3. The Appellant must lodge a Notice of Appeal setting out one or both of the limited grounds of appeal together with any supporting documentation.
4. The Notice of Appeal must be emailed to the Sport Governance Executive, Paul Hayes at phayes@horsesportireland.ie
5. An administrative fee of €100.00 must be paid with the Notice of Appeal either electronically to Horse Sport Ireland Bank Account (IBAN & BIC) made payable to 'Horse Sport Ireland' or by an agreed process with Horse Sport Ireland. This fee will be refunded to the Appellant if the Appeal is successful.

NGB Nomination Appeal - Leave to Appeal

1. The Sport Governance Executive shall review the Notice of Appeal and any attached documents in order to determine whether leave to appeal should be granted to the Appellant.
2. The Sport Governance Executive shall have regard to:
 - (a) whether the Notice of Appeal was served in time and;
 - (b) whether an eligible ground of appeal has been raised in the Notice of Appeal in determining whether leave to appeal should be granted
3. When the Sport Governance Executive determines that an Appellant has or has not met the criteria for leave to appeal, then they shall communicate the decision to grant, or refuse leave to appeal to the Appellant and to the CEO of Horse Sport Ireland within one (1) day of receipt of the Notice of Appeal.
4. Within (1) one day of receipt of a decision to grant leave to appeal the Sport Governance Executive shall:
 - (a) appoint one panel member from the Independent Appeal Committee, (this panel will comprise of two independent individuals),
 - (b) deliver to the Panel Member and the Appellant the appeal documents and
 - (c) notify the Appellant of the composition of the Panel Member appointed.
5. The Appellant shall raise any objection to the appointed Panel Member setting out the reasons for such objection within (1) one day of receipt of the notice of the composition. If there is any objection to the Panel Member appointed the Sport Governance Executive shall determine if the objection is upheld or not. If there is a reasonable perception of bias or actual bias, then that Panel Member should stand aside. If the objection is upheld, then the Sport Governance Executive shall appoint a new Panel Member to adjudicate the matter.
6. All appeals will be limited to documentary evidence only and hearings for the purposes of submissions and argument will take place virtually by way of video link hosted by Microsoft Teams or Zoom Conferencing.
7. The Panel Member shall have discretion to extend or truncate the timeline for the appeal hearing where it deems fit.
8. Within (1) one day of the Panel Member being appointed (and not be objected to), the Appellant shall deliver its witness statements and written submissions to the Panel Member and the Sport Governance Executive.
 - (a) Within one day of receipt the Sport Governance Executive shall submit any responding witness statements and written submissions to the Panel Member and the Appellant.
 - (b) where it appears that the interests of a Third Party may be affected by any decision of the NGB Nomination Appeal, the Panel Member may notify the Third party and invite the Third Party to make submissions and produce additional documents. The Panel Member shall permit such time as it deems reasonable for delivery of such submissions and documents, but this shall not exceed two days.

- (c) The Panel Member shall conduct such a hearing as referred to at Paragraph 6 herein within (1) one day of receipt of the last set of submissions permitted to them.
9. The decision of the Panel Member is limited to determining whether either or both of the grounds for appeal have been substantiated.
10. The Panel Member shall have the flexibility to conduct the appeal in any manner it deems fit, subject to the appeal being conducted fairly.
11. The Panel Member may, at its sole discretion, disregard any non-material failure by a party to adhere to these Procedures and may give such further directions as may be appropriate.
12. If any party fails to comply with the Panel Member's direction or other communication issued by the Panel Member, the appeal may proceed in the absence of that party's compliance.
13. The Panel Member shall either uphold or reject the appeal. The Panel Member cannot substitute their decision for the decision of the High-Performance Director. Where the appeal is upheld, then the Panel Member shall remit the matter back to the High-Performance Director with directions.
14. Each party shall be responsible for their own costs and expenses, including legal costs for the appeal hearing. The Panel Member has no power to make an award of legal costs against a party.
15. The Panel Member shall email a written reasoned decision to the parties copying the Sport Governance Executive within one day of the conclusion of the appeal hearing.
16. The decision of the Panel Member shall be binding on the parties and any affected third party who is a stakeholder within Horse Sport Ireland, subject to a right to challenge such decision before the Sports Dispute Solutions Ireland (SDSI) in accordance with the SDSI arbitration rules and procedures.
17. Any arbitral challenge to the decision of the appointed Panel Member will be heard by Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland and otherwise proceed in accordance with the time limits set out below and in accordance with SDSI Arbitration Rules for final and binding arbitration.
18. Any eligible athlete wishing to further appeal must lodge a Notice of Appeal Form with SDSI in line with their supplementary procedures for Paris 2024 Athlete Nomination and Selection Appeals, SDSI, and pay the relevant fee to SDSI. Athletes must submit the completed form within 12 hours of receipt by them of the decision arising from the Horse Sport Ireland NGB Nomination Appeal Process. Athletes must copy HSI Sport Governance Executive, Paul Hayes in email to the appeal at the address phayes@horsesportireland.ie.

Ends/